United Nations S/2016/764

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 September 2016
English
Original: French

Letter dated 6 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to draw the attention of the Security Council to the situation regarding the inclusive national political dialogue convened in November 2015 by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, with a view to defusing the political situation and allowing the various components of Congolese society to reach consensus in order to bring the electoral process to a successful conclusion.

It is no secret that a certain fringe opposition group initially opposed the dialogue and subsequently made its participation contingent on the appointment of an international facilitator by the United Nations. Consequently, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Said Djinnit, was given the responsibility of consulting with the Congolese political class; however, in response to the opposition's reservations regarding Mr. Djinnit, the United Nations then requested the African Union to appoint a facilitator.

Mr. Edem Kodjo was subsequently appointed to serve in that capacity. Following that appointment the presidential majority, in the interests of national harmony and cohesion, conceded to the following opposition demands:

- The establishment of an international support group, composed of representatives of the United Nations, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the African Union and the United States of America, to assist the facilitator;
- The release of so-called political prisoners;
- The opening of media outlets.

Despite the efforts of the facilitator to reconcile the various positions and of the presidential majority to meet the demands of the opposition, the latter continues to prevaricate, imposing new conditions in order to stall the process. Against this backdrop, one opposition group, through the President of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS), has unilaterally rejected the international facilitator and requested the African Union to appoint another. The group, which has recently opposed the start of the preparatory work for the dialogue, has also called for a one-day general strike to create unrest in Kinshasa and blame the Government for the consequences.

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Given the behaviour of certain opposition political actors who are rejecting the voice of reason and putting the greater good of the country at risk, my Government calls the Security Council to witness and requests it to:

1. Take note of the Government's good faith and recognize the efforts it has made, through gestures of conciliation, to defuse the situation and enable the dialogue to proceed smoothly;

2. Note and condemn the irresponsible behaviour of a fringe opposition group which, in boycotting the dialogue, is pursuing a hidden agenda that will impede the peaceful resolution of the political situation and create an atmosphere of unrest and violence in the country;

3. Call on the recalcitrant group to refrain from any act liable to result in violence or threaten law and order, and to rejoin the dialogue, which is the proper forum for discussing all claims in order to reach a consensus that will enable the organization of credible, fair elections in a peaceful climate;

4. Hold the opposition group, should it continue to refuse to participate, fully accountable for any disturbances that occur in the country.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ignace **Gata Mavita**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative